

THE REHEARSAL.

1. It will be ill taken to *Un-church* the *Kirk*.
2. But it is Necessary in *Charity* to their *Souls* and my own.
3. They Undervalue our *Baptisms*, as much as we do *Theirs*.
4. They *Answer* (by their *Observer*) in Setting up downright *Persecution* against me.
5. The *Episcopal* People in *Scotland* must come to *England* to have their Children *Baptiz'd*. The Example of *Tobit*.
6. They who have Receiv'd *Presbyterian* *Baptism* there ought to seek the *Episcopal*.
7. The Hazard of going to *Doubtful* *Baptism*, where we may have what is *Secure*.
8. How *Sollicitous* we are about the *Title* of an *Estate*, and how *Indifferent* as to *Heaven*.

WEDNESDAY, January 5. 1708.

(1.) *Country-man*.

OUR last Discourse has made a great Impression upon me. You have shew'd me Plainly that *Baptism* is an *Initiating* and *Regenerating* Ordinance. And that it is not now to be had in the *Erastian* *Kirk* of *Scotland* (*Erastian* shall always be their *Epithet* with me) Nay, that their *Baptisms* are Worse than *None*! That they are out of the *Catholic* Church, and so not to be *Reckon'd* as *Christians*! Bleis me! You'll be call'd a very *Hot* man, *High-Church* indeed! They'll *Curse* you by *Bell* *Book* and *Candle*.

(2.) *Rehearsal*. If they *Curse*, I'll *Bless* them, by Endeavouring to Turn them from their *Iniquity*. I'm sure I shou'd have less *Charity*, if I suffer'd them to go on in their *Sins*, without telling them of it. I must Sow on, tho' some fall upon *Stones*, or among *Thorns*. I hope ther is some *Good Ground* among them, men who will overcome *Prejudices* and Consider. At least I have *Deliver'd* my own *Soul*. And they, whether they will Hear, or whether they will *Forbear*, shall know, That the *Truth* has been told them, and that so Evidently, as that they cannot Answer or Deny it.

(3.) And how can they call it *High-Flying* to say their *Baptisms* are Worse than *None*, when they say the same of our *Private* *Baptisms*, and Declare it in their Practice, suffering their own Children to *Dye* without *Baptism*, rather than give them *Private* *Baptism*? And how can they say, That it is

an *Over-Charge* upon them, that they think ther is no *Benefit* in *Baptism*, when they will let their Children Die without it? Wou'd they keep back from their Expiring *Infants* any thing they thought in the least *Beneficial* towards their *Salvation*? Wou'd they be thought so *Cruel* and *Hard-Hearted* to their own *Flesh* and *Blood*!

Country-m. It cannot be gainsaid. It is *Apparent* and *Notorious* to all the *World*! And *Wo* be to them who, knowing this, wou'd Sooth them, or let them Sleep on in their *Sins*. And it must be *Hard Knocking*, and *Shaking* them that will *Awaken* them. Tho' he that does it get as little Thanks as who wou'd *Rouse* a *Sluggard* out of a *Sweet Slumber*, tho' the *House* were on *Fire* about him. But afterwards he will Bless you, when he sees the *Danger* he has Escap'd!

Rehears. If I have Rais'd their *Indignation*, and if they are Intended to do me any *Mischief* (as I have been told) all I shall say to them is, That I had rather Suffer By them than For them, in not *Warning* them while ther was Space of *Repentance*.

(4.) *Country-m.* You need not question their good will. The *Observer* has of a long time been hunting the *Government* upon you. He says he has Solicited the *Lords* and *Commons*, and the *Scotch* *Members* in particular; And lastly he has been Stirring up the *Grand Juries* to make *Presentments* against you.

Rehears. That was only because he had the Better of the *Argument*, and to shew his *Moderation*!

Country-m.

Country-m. His own Friends cry Shame up on him for this. They say, Is this like a *Disputant*? They think it is giving up the *Cause*, and looks *Pitiful*.

(5.) *Rehears.* When the *ten Tribes* had *Revolted*, and their *New King* had set up *New Priests*, *Tobit* of the *Tribe of Nephthali* went up every Year to *Jerusalem* with his *First-Fruits* and *Tenths*, to keep the *Fasts* and to *Sacrifice* there *Tob. i. v. s. 6, 7.* He did not *Plead* the *Legal Establishment* as a *Justification* of the *New Priesthood*, or a *Discharge* to him from his *Obligations* to that *Priesthood* which *God* had *Appointed*. He thought it not in the *Power* of the *King* and *People* with him to *Alter* or *Change* that *Priesthood*, or to set up any *Other*. Or to *Alienate* the *Tenths* and *First-Fruits*, but he *Pay'd* them still to the *True Priests* the *Sons of Aaron*, tho' he then *Liv'd* in another *Kingdom*, and belong'd to one of their *Tribes*. Now *Baptism* is of *Greater Importance* than the *Legal Institutions*: And from *Scotland* to *England* is as near a *Journey* as from *Israel* to *Judah*. Therefore if the *Conscientious* in *Scotland* cannot have *Clergy* who are *Authoriz'd* by *Christ* to *Baptize* their *Children*, they shou'd imitate the *Piety* of *Tobit*, and come into *England* for it. Tho' the *Hardship* is very *Great* to put *Infants* to take such *Journeys* at all *Seasons* of the *Year*. And all have not the *Convenience* if they wou'd. I pray *God* pity their *Cafe*, and *Deliver Us* from the *Like*. We deserve it. Nor are we to think these *Sinners* above all others in *Britain*. But, except ye *Repent*—

(6.) *Country-m.* But if any who have *Receiv'd* *Presbyterian Baptism* in *Scotland*, shou'd upon *Examining* the *Matter* find it to be *Null* and *Void*, what wou'd you have them do?

Rehears. If it were my *Cafe*, I wou'd be *Baptiz'd* by some of the *Episcopal Clergy*. I say not *Re-Baptiz'd*, because I Judge the *Former* to be no *Baptism* at all, as being done without any even *Verbal Consent* of the *Bishop* that can possibly be *suppos'd* (as in the *Cafe* of *Lay-Baptism*, where it is *allow'd* or *Conniv'd* at in *Cafe* of *Necessity*, and in some *Foreign Churches*, where the like *Necessity* is *Pleaded*) but in *Direct Opposition* not only to their own *Bishops*, but to all the *Episcopal Authority* in the whole *Church* of *God*. A *case* not known in *St. Cyprian's* time, and when the *Dispute* of *Re-Baptization* was so *Warmly* *Canvass'd*. No such sort of *Schismatics* from the *Universal Church* of *Christ* was then known in the *World*. And in *Cases* of such *Importance* it is surely *Best* to take the *Safest* *Side*.

(7.) *Country-m.* Wou'd *Tender Parents* who are so *Sollicitous* about the *Welfare* of their *Children* Consider seriously of this, they wou'd not bring them to (at the *Best*) *Doubted Baptism*. They wou'd not run any *Hazard* of their *Souls*, but go where their *Baptism* was *Secure*, even by the *Confession* of the *Presbyterians* themselves, and so wou'd be *safe* on all *sides*.

(8.) *Rehears.* There is nothing wherein Men are so *Generous* as in *Venturing* their *Souls*! None wou'd *Buy* an *Estate* of a *Doubtful Title* to please *Friend* or *Party*. We are *Careful* how we lay out our *Money*. We will see the *Deeds* *Perfected*, and *Examine* strictly the *Authority* of the *Attorney* who *Signs* them. We must see his *Letter of Attorney*, and that it be *Sufficiently Witness'd*. We take no *bodies Word* in such *Cases*.

But as to our *Eternal Inheritance*, we *Believe* every body that goes along the *Highway*. If we like a *Man's Face*, or the *Tune* of his *Voice*, We *Adapt* him of our own *Heads* to be an *Attorney* for *God*, to *Sign* and *Seal* His *Covenant* with *Us*. If we are *Pleas'd*, we think *God* must be *Pleas'd* too! And if any tell us, That *God* has *Appointed* an *Order* of Men for this *Purpose*, and given them His *Commission* and *Authority* to *Baptize*, in His *Name*; and *Promis'd* to *Ratify* in *Heaven* what His *Attornies* thus *Impow'r'd* by Him shall, in His *Name*, *Sign* and *Seal* upon *Earth*; or *Else* why did He appoint such an *Order* of Men, and give them such *Powers*? We *Call* all this, *Stuff*! *Nay*, but give me a *Gifted Man* of my own *Chusing*! And we will venture the *Souls* of our poor *Infants*, and our own too! Are they not our own!

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